



open arms

OPEN ARMS
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
2024

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1. Open Arms' Child Protection Policy Statement

OA believes that the welfare of the child is paramount, and that steps must be taken to ensure that children are protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual violence,” as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 19, 1989.

OA has a particular duty of care to prevent abuse by OA staff (that is, volunteers and other representatives) or partners which it introduces to welfare home children. The Child Protection Policy marks the clear commitment of OA to work against child abuse and to protect and safeguard children that come into contact with OA programs and staff. It also aims to create a safe work environment for each staff member and to protect him or her from false accusations.

OA does not accept any form of violence against children and implements a zero-tolerance approach.

1.1 Aims of the Child Protection Policy:

- Guidelines and procedures for the protection and well being of children with whom OA works or otherwise comes in contact are in place.
- The organization and its entire staff – including anyone acting as a representative of OA - are aware of Child Protection issues i.e. abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence and how to avoid actions that could be misinterpreted as constituting or leading to abuse.
- Actual and suspected cases of child abuse are reported and responded to.

1.2 Scope of the policy and to whom it applies

OA applies its Child Protection Policy in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989. Child Protection is both a corporate and an individual responsibility, which means OA as an organization is obliged to fulfill these responsibilities as well as every staff member. Therefore, OA is committed to ensuring that OA staff, representatives and partners understand and are committed to Child Protection principles and that best practice in recruitment and partnership formation is adhered to at all times.

- The Child Protection Policy of OA set out in this document applies equally to all OA staff.
- The conduct of OA staff outside of the work context is also covered by the policy where it gives rise to concern.
- OA partners are required to act in accordance with either OA's or their own Child Protection Policy, where this meets similar standards.
- The Policy also covers all organizations supported or funded by OA where they do not have a policy that reflects an equivalent standard of protection for children.

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout the document.

2.1 General Definitions

Child/Children	Any person under the age of 18 years (Article 1, CRC, 1989).
OA/The Organization	Open Arms Korea
OA Executive Committee	The management body responsible for the running of OA and chaired by the Executive Director of OA
OA staff members, OA staff	All OA Members, volunteers, interns and any paid staff
OA representatives	All non-members representing OA, including partners where they are volunteering on OA programs, and consultants
Team leaders/ Program managers	Those in charge of a particular program or the person leading the team of volunteers on the day
Programs	All events, sessions, lessons or classes held, led or run by OA for welfare home children where there is contact between the children and OA staff or partners
Welfare Home	Care facility housing children because of abandonment, abuse, neglect or inability of parents or families to take care of them
Welfare Home Liaison	The OA staff member tasked with liaising with a specific welfare home
Partners/ Partnerships	Individuals or organizations with whom OA has a relationship to further the wellbeing of welfare home children
CPO/Child Protection Officer	The person in OA with overall charge of the implementation of the OA Child Protection Policy
Safeguarding Team	The team of people who advise and assist the CPO with the implementation of the Child Protection Policy
Partnership Agreement	A mutual agreement between OA and other parties as to aims, responsibilities and plan of action to work together. The term Memorandum of Understanding or MOU may also be used
UN CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

2.2 Definition of Child Abuse

Children have the right to be protected from violence, which is defined as all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual violence (Article 19, CRC, 1989). Unless specified, child abuse as mentioned in the document can mean any or all of the following forms of abuse or exploitation

Abuse

Child abuse is a deliberate act of ill treatment that can harm or is likely to harm a child's safety, wellbeing, dignity or development. Abuse includes all forms of physical, sexual, psychological and emotional ill treatment.

The majority of child abuse is committed by those known to the child, that are in a position of trust and power – for example, parents, guardians, and those with temporary care of the child such as a teacher or community worker. However, peer to peer abuse can also take place, as well as abuse by strangers.

2.2.1 Physical Abuse

Involves the use of physical force so as to cause actual or likely physical injury or suffering. Includes but is not limited to:

- Smacking, punching, beating, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving, grabbing
- Hitting a child with an object
- Leaving a child in an uncomfortable/undignified posture or poor environment
- Forcing a child to work for long periods of time or in poor conditions
- Harmful initiation ceremonies
- Excessive punishment

2.2.2 Emotional Abuse

Includes humiliating and degrading treatment. Includes but is not limited to:

- Isolating/excluding a child
- Stigmatizing a child
- Failing to provide a supportive environment
- Exploiting a child
- Treating a child with disrespect or disdain
- Belittling, blaming, scaring, discriminating or ridiculing
- Spreading rumors
- Blackmailing a child
- Bullying
- Threatening to harm a child

2.2.3 Sexual Abuse

Includes all forms of sexual violence. Sexual abuse may or may not involve actual contact. Includes but is not limited to:

- Any sexual activity with a child (under 18 years): vaginal or anal intercourse, oral sex, touching of genitalia, kissing or holding in a sexual manner
- Forcing a child to watch or perform sexual activities
- Obscene remarks - written or verbal
- Exposure to or use in pornography
- Sexually intrusive questions and comments
- Incest
- Forced and early marriage

2.2.4 Neglect

Deliberately or through carelessness or negligence, failing to provide for, or secure for a child, their right to physical safety and development. Neglect is the failure to carry out some key aspect of the care and protection of children, which results in harm to the child's physical and mental wellbeing and/or development. Includes but is not limited to:

- Leaving a child unattended (e.g. alone at home)
- Failing to provide food
- Failing to provide education
- Failing to provide healthcare

Exploitation

Child exploitation refers to the use of children in work or other activities for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social development. Two main forms of child exploitation are recognized:

2.2.5 Economic exploitation

Using a child in work or other activities for the (financial) benefit of others. Includes but is not limited to:

- Child domestic work
- Child bondage
- The use of children in criminal activities including the sale of narcotics
- The use of children in armed conflict and as child soldiers
- The involvement of children in harmful or hazardous work

2.2.6 Sexual exploitation

The abuse of a position of vulnerability, position of power, or trust, for sexual purposes, includes profiting monetarily, socially and politically for

the exploitation as well as personal sexual gratification. Includes but is not limited to:

- Child prostitution
- Child trafficking for sexual abuse and exploitation
- Child pornography
- Sexual slavery

2.3 Concerns versus Suspicions or Allegations

In this document we have differentiated between “concerns” and “suspicions” or “allegations”. A concern would indicate doubts around behavior which might fall short of the standards of the Code of Conduct but would not constitute an allegation of abuse. This would generally be dealt with at a team level unless the behavior was sustained and needed to be escalated. Allegations would be more concrete suspicions arising from behavior that might constitute abuse and would be dealt with at the level of the Safeguarding Team via a reporting mechanism. This nuance aims to create a culture within which concerns can be discussed and addressed before they require more formal action. Team leaders will keep the Safeguarding Team informed of ongoing concerns.

3. Open Arms Korea Vision and Mission

3.1 Our Vision:

Our vision is a community where children are accepted, valued and unconditionally loved so they can grow into adults who will contribute positively to our society.

3.2 Our Mission:

Guided by the belief that all children have equal value, Open Arms provides personalized English education to children in South Korean welfare homes. Our strong community of support empowers them to realize their self-worth and reach their potential socially, emotionally and academically. In addition to a personalized program throughout their childhood, our dedicated team of diverse volunteers attempt to link the children to a more global world view.

3.3 Background to the Child Protection Policy

Abuse and exploitation of children happens in all countries and societies. OA recognizes that organizations working with children are at risk of exploitation by abusers from within. Children may therefore come to harm whilst accessing OA programs if this matter is not adequately addressed.

3.4 Personnel responsible for implementing the policy and procedures

The Child Protection Officer has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and works with the Safeguarding Team reporting to the Executive Director of OA. The OA Executive Committee appoints the CPO and members of the Safeguarding Team.

The Safeguarding Team is composed of the CPO and two other members, including at least one fluent Korean speaker. Not all members should be involved in the day to day volunteering work on OA programs. The Safeguarding Team may include a partner or consultant outside of OA's membership who is familiar with the context within which OA works. The Safeguarding Team, chaired by the CPO, is the body which leads any investigation of abuse, reports externally and decides internal outcomes and follow-up action.

The Safeguarding Team will keep updated and arrange training for themselves in child protection within Korean law and international best practice and will also assist the CPO to ensure the provisions of this policy are met, with particular regard for recruitment and training procedures.

The CPO must ensure that procedures are in place for reporting and responding to allegations. This should include awareness of external resources available, including: child protection committees, the police, community based structures and other NGOs with a mandated child protection role, eg Save the Children.

At the completion of any investigation, the CPO will prepare a review of the policy and procedures for the OA Executive Committee.

CP Tool 1: [Role Description of Child Protection Officer](#)

3.5 Responsibility of Managers Under the Child Protection Policy

Whilst the CPO, reporting to the Executive Director, has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy, other directors, program managers and liaisons may be responsible for continual full implementation of the policy within their areas. Specifically they hold the responsibility to:

- Support and maintain an environment, which prevents exploitation and abuse of children and promotes the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Implement the provisions of the policy within their areas, under the guidance of the CPO.
- Be accountable for ensuring that all staff and relevant others have access to the Child Protection Policy, are aware of and understand its contents and are clear about the responsibilities it places on them.
- Be accountable for ensuring that an open and responsive management culture is developed so that staff and others are able to discuss the issue of child abuse and be confident of a positive response to any concerns that may arise.
- Keep the CPO apprised of concerns that arise within teams so that patterns can be identified across the organization.
- Take seriously reports of Child Protection concerns, handling at the lowest appropriate level, and follow the reporting and response mechanisms where concrete suspicions or allegations need to be escalated to the next level.

- Where a manager has received a report of abuse implicating a member of the Safeguarding Team, to work with the other members of the team to suspend the member implicated from all safeguarding duties.

3.6 Confidentiality

OA takes confidentiality very seriously, and it is covered separately in this document for the benefit of OA staff members or representatives following the reporting process. As a general rule, confidentiality does not mean keeping secrets or covering up mistakes. Confidentiality should respect the dignity of all involved in any aspect of OA's work: first and foremost, the children in OA programs, but also OA staff, volunteers, partners and welfare home staff. Confidentiality should work hand in hand with the culture of openness and transparency that OA aims to provide.

Reporting and response to suspicions and allegations must be sensitive to the needs and best interest of the child and are covered by the confidentiality agreement in the Code of Conduct. OA staff and representatives will discuss active cases only with the Safeguarding Team and reports will be kept private and securely stored.

4. How Child Abuse could arise within OA's work

OA recognises that organizations working with children are susceptible to abuse from within. Certain individuals target child focused agencies in order to gain access to children, others may abuse the positions of trust they find themselves in once OA recruits them and some may simply have different values and understanding on how to treat children. There are many ways in which Child Protection allegations could arise within the work of OA, for example:

- A child is abused, or groomed for abuse, in an OA supported program or activity (by a staff member, representative or other)
- A staff member, or other representative uses their position within OA to contact a child in order to abuse them, or gain access to a home in order to perpetrate abuse
- A child is abused in an OA partner program or activity (by a staff member, representative or other)
- An OA staff member or representative abuses a child outside of OA work (i.e. in their private life) and it comes to the attention of OA
- An OA staff member becomes aware of child abuse affecting children supported by OA programs or activities in the welfare home or the wider community.

Child Protection issues may arise in a variety of ways including: direct disclosures; concerns; observations, suspicions or allegations.

5. Recruitment, Training and Code of Conduct

In the recruitment, selection and training of staff and partners, OA will take steps to ensure awareness of the commitment to preventing and responding to child abuse and exploitation within, and in association with, OA.

5.1 Recruitment of Members, partners and other staff

OA has installed several screening procedures when recruiting volunteers to support the safeguarding of children. This ensures that correct identity, suitability to work with children and willingness to adhere to OA's child protection procedures have all been checked for each candidate.

- Job specifications/volunteer assignments/terms of reference clearly outline generic and specific Child Protection responsibilities.
- Application and Registration for Membership of OA will include questions on child protection, previous countries of residence and a specific declaration regarding previous convictions or accusations of child abuse.

CP Tool 2: [Application Form](#)

- All interviews will contain specific questions relating to previous history and qualifications for working for a child rights organization, working with, and attitude towards children.

CP Tool 3: [Staff Recruitment](#)

- All candidates will require specific professional references from previous employers and/or educational institutions. Recommendations from friends and family members do not qualify as a professional reference. References must include name, email address, relationship with the applicant and country of residence of referees, and may be followed up in writing or by phone.

CP Tool 4: [Character Reference Form](#)

- Where necessary or desirable, OA staff and representatives will undergo annual criminal record checks through registration via the Korean police license system .
- All OA staff and representatives will undergo an ID check of their passport, ARC or Korean identity card, including a photo of the ID, and the registered address will be checked against the address provided on the Volunteer registration.
- All OA staff, volunteers and representatives will be given a copy of the Code of Conduct (covering Child Protection and Behavior Agreements) and the Declaration of Association, and have access to this Child Protection Policy Document. All staff are required to sign

the Code of Conduct and file a Declaration of Association (including NIL responses) prior to commencing work and on an annual basis.

5.2 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Association

OA takes measures to ensure that those it has recruited understand how to act and are protected against unwarranted accusations of child abuse. It does this through the Code of Conduct and the Declaration of Association.

5.2.1 Code of Conduct

OA's Child Protection Policy is summarized and referenced within our Code of Conduct, which comprises a Child Protection and Behavior Agreement. This document is based on the humanitarian standard of 'do no harm' and aims to ensure the highest standards of professional and personal practice in working with children.

All staff, volunteers, representatives and partners of OA must sign up to and abide by this agreement on an annual basis, which applies both within working hours and outside of working hours.

CP Tool 5: [Code of Conduct Form](#), [Code of Conduct Summary](#)

5.2.2 Declaration of Association

In order to maintain transparency of the extent of any individual's work with vulnerable children, a Declaration of Association must be filed annually with details of how any OA staff member, representative or partner works with children from welfare homes, including online, either individually (including mentoring or tutoring on behalf of OA) or with another organization, including a partner organization. Failure to make such a declaration will be in breach of the Code of Conduct. If an OA staff member has no associations with welfare homes or children outside of OA, then a NIL response must be filed.

CP Tool 6: [Declaration of Association Form](#), [Declaration Summary](#)

5.3 Training of Volunteers

The Child Protection Policy needs to be understood accurately by all staff. As such, regular awareness raising and training are essential to the implementation of the Child Protection Policy. The CPO will make provisions to ensure that all staff and representatives of OA are aware of:

- the problem of child abuse and exploitation
- their own personal responsibility to prevent abuse
- their own personal responsibility to report suspicions of abuse by OA staff members and representatives
- their own personal responsibility to report suspicions of abuse associated with OA supported programs
- how to report, and where appropriate, how to respond to suspicions of abuse

- how to protect themselves and other staff from unwarranted suspicions of abuse

The CPO will liaise with the Volunteer Director to ensure that training takes place for new OA staff and is refreshed on an annual basis.

6. Reporting Abuse – All OA staff and representatives

All OA staff members and representatives have an immediate duty to report if they suspect abuse, exploitation or violence against a child in relation to OA. Open Arms adheres to ‘the best interest of a child’ principle, which means that the child’s welfare comes first. The organization commits to take seriously any concern raised. All staff and representatives of OA should be made aware of the process of reporting and responding to suspected abuse. OA will ensure that:

- OA staff/representatives, children, or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns receive support.
- There is a culture of openness in the organization to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed.

The same procedure applies for reporting and responding to any suspicion relating to abuse of children with whom OA works, or to suspected child abuse by OA staff members or representatives.

6.1 How to report Child Protection Issues – All staff working with children

6.1.1 Initial Concerns

If you are concerned about any behavior of a child or an adult with which you feel uncomfortable, or which falls short of the standards of behavior expected in a staff member, you should raise your concerns with the group coordinator. If he or she is the person you have concerns about, or you do not feel that your concerns have been taken seriously, or at any stage you wish to escalate the concern to an allegation, you should contact a member of the Safeguarding Team or use the whistleblower mechanism.

6.1.2 Whistleblower’s Form

The Whistleblower’s Form exists to allow all OA staff and representatives safely to make observations to the CPO (or through the CPO, to other senior management where applicable) regarding mismanagement, system failures, concerns about poor behavior or obstruction of duty, in all aspects of OA’s work. The form can be submitted anonymously if wished.

Remember that if you use the Whistleblower’s Form anonymously to make specific allegations regarding safeguarding, you will not be able to receive any updates and it may hamper an investigation. For specific allegations regarding child abuse or safeguarding you should always consider using the

Child Protection Incident Reporting Form and if necessary submit further detail through the Whistleblower's Form.

CP Tool 7: [Whistleblower's Form](#)

6.1.3 Suspicious and Allegations

If you have concrete suspicions of child abuse you should contact the Safeguarding Team as soon as is possible but always within 24 hours. Avoid delay.

Initially the report can be made verbally, by telephone or in person, but the Child Protection Incident Reporting Form must then be completed. This form must be filled out (with support where necessary) by the OA staff member who raises the allegation. If several OA staff have witnessed the suspected abuse, they must all fill in the reporting form independently and in their own words, avoiding discussing the details of the incident beforehand as much as possible. Always maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis. The Incident Reporting Form uploads to a secure database where it can only be seen by the Safeguarding Team.

CP Tool 8: [Child Protection Incident Reporting Form](#)

Do not use this form if your suspicion relates to a member of the Safeguarding Team, but contact another director in person or by phone instead. The Safeguarding Team member under suspicion will be removed from access to the Incident Form and you will be told when you can then fill it in.

6.1.4 Incidents in Emergencies (use of unavoidable force)

Where there is an immediate risk of physical harm to a child from themselves or from another child, contact a member of staff from the welfare home, or get help from your team to do so, rather than try to restrain any child yourself.

In a situation where immediate help is not available, or is still on the way, and it is appropriate in the moment, eg, to prevent a child physically abusing another or harming themselves, consider using your own body (eg. an arm) as a barrier or shield, rather than catching hold of the child (unless it is imperative to do so, eg, to stop the child from falling). In this way, the force of the child who is causing harm either to themselves or to another child is on you, rather than you restraining the child. Only do this if you feel confident not to hurt yourself.

If a child is being extremely violent and threatening towards other children and/or volunteers, ensure they are not at risk of immediate danger to themselves and remove the other children and volunteers to a safe place until welfare home staff can be contacted.

In all such cases, inform your team leader as soon as possible and inform the welfare home staff if they are not already involved. A reporting form should be filled out independently by all concerned, explaining all the facts of the matter. Witness reports must be made by all OA staff who were present. This is particularly important if, in an emergency or as a natural reaction to perceived danger, you have physically restrained a child in order to prevent harm to him/her or to another child.

6.1.5 Responding to Disclosure by Children

At times, children themselves may disclose (tell you directly) that they are being abused. As the first person the child is telling, your role is to listen to the child and to respond in a calm and supportive manner. NEVER ask the child questions that probe what they are saying; you are not an investigator. Record what they say and then follow the reporting procedure as described above

Remember that the child is NEVER to blame in situations of abuse. You should reassure them that they have done nothing wrong and that they did the right thing by reporting the abuse. Never promise that you will not tell anyone. Explain that you will now talk to someone who knows what to do. Explain to the child what will happen next. Follow the reporting procedure as outlined above.

6.1.6 Rumors and how to respond

If your suspicions arise from rumors that are circulating, then those circulating the rumors should be challenged about whether they have reported their suspicions, and encouraged to do so. Nevertheless, you should still also make your own report in order to bring it to the attention of the Safeguarding Team, who may be unaware if there are no witnesses coming forward. Make clear in your report what you have heard, and how widespread you believe the rumor is (eg, within your team/ outside of your team) and who is implicated (if known). Rumors can unfairly damage reputations, but can also turn out to be true, and it is up to all OA staff members and representatives to ensure that they do not circulate without being properly investigated to establish the facts of the matter.

6.1.7 Responsibility of OA staff to follow up reports

You are responsible for checking with the person to whom you have reported to make sure that the report has been followed up, if you have not heard back from that person within 48 hours.

CP Tool 9: [Child Protection: Members of the Safeguarding Team](#)

6.2 How OA Management will respond to Child Protection reports

The member of the Safeguarding Team to whom you submitted your report will contact the other members of the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible and always within 48 hours. The Safeguarding Team member will confirm with you

that your report is being actioned within 48 hours and will ensure that any implicated OA staff member or representative is suspended from contact with the children. The outcome of any decisions will be relayed to you, any witnesses and any OA staff member under suspicion within 7 days of the completion of the investigation, unless it is against the best interests of the child to do so. The OA team affected will be offered support and guidance where appropriate.

6.3 Confidentiality in the reporting process

It is essential that confidentiality is respected at all times during the process of reporting, responding to and investigating suspicions of abuse. A breach of confidentiality may have serious consequences for anyone involved – either the child or the adult. All records/reports will be kept in a secure and locked place with limited access. Disclosure of information can be made only to relevant parties on a need-to-know basis.

If you have implicated an OA staff member or representative in your report, it is important to respect that person's right to defend themselves until all the facts are known. Therefore, you should keep the details of your suspicions strictly on a need-to-know basis within your team (if there were other witnesses) and with the person to whom you reported. Rest assured that the OA staff member will have no further contact with the children unless they are exonerated from blame after a thorough investigation.

If your report implicates someone other than an OA staff member or representative, it is also important to maintain confidentiality. The matter will be dealt with by the Safeguarding Team in a sensitive and culturally appropriate manner according to local law and in the best interests of the child. The OA team members who are witnesses to disclosure will be given advice on how to proceed.

7. Responding to Reports of Abuse: Action by Safeguarding Team

The CPO along with the other members of the Safeguarding Team (as long as each individual is not implicated in the report) will lead the response to all reports of abuse, in order to ascertain as quickly as possible whether further action is required by external agencies. In cases involving criminal behavior, or where matters are not in the hands of OA, the Safeguarding Team will cooperate with any external investigation in tandem with conducting its own. In other cases, before any external bodies are involved, the facts, nature and seriousness of the allegation need to be assessed.

7.1 Addressing concerns

In the case of concerns expressed within a team or directly to the CPO about behavior which does not obviously constitute abuse, action should center on retraining (if applicable) or monitoring the situation, unless it is considered

necessary to escalate to an investigation, when the steps below should be taken.

7.2 Reports concerning OA staff members or representatives

All reports of abuse, from wherever they originate, including from outside of OA, should be shared with the members of the Safeguarding Team, unless a member of the Safeguarding Team is implicated in the report. Other personnel who may be involved in any investigation may include the Volunteer Director, the Education Director, the Executive Director and the relevant Welfare Home Liaison. The Safeguarding Team will decide which personnel to involve, depending on the nature and seriousness of the accusation and on a need-to-know basis. The following steps should be taken:

7.2.1 Timescale of follow-up to a report

The CPO, or the person to whom the report was first made, is accountable for taking the allegation forward with the Safeguarding Team. Other members must be informed within 48 hours and a date set for an initial meeting to discuss the report. The person who made the report must be informed that this is being done within 48 hours. Where possible, arrangements should be made to follow-up with relevant parties within 7 days of completion of the investigation.

7.2.2 Suspension of suspected OA member

If there is an allegation of abuse involving an OA staff member, they must be contacted and suspended from programs before their next contact with children. Consideration should also be given to whether the suspected staff member also has access to volunteer data, other sensitive information or other duties that they should be suspended from. The suspected person may be consulted as to what reason will be given to team members for their absence. A mutually agreed date will be set for them to meet with the Safeguarding Team. The team leader or volunteer coordinator will be informed that the person cannot take part in program activities on a need-to-know basis. If the accusation originated with the welfare home, they must be informed that the suspected person has been suspended with immediate effect.

7.2.3 Allegations involving a member of the Safeguarding Team

If the allegation involves a member of the Safeguarding Team, the person making the report should contact another member of the OA Executive Committee. The person contacted must immediately make sure, with the cooperation of the other members of the Safeguarding Team, that the person suspected is suspended from their duties, including access to Child Safeguarding Incident Reports, emails and related accounts, and the witness must then be advised that they may make their report via the Incident Report form.

7.2.4 Evidence Gathering

All paperwork relating to the accused individual will be reviewed, including any Declaration of Association that has been submitted, any references sought and Child Protection record provided. The Welfare Home Liaison will discreetly check with the welfare home whether the individual has had any known contact outside of the OA programs.

7.2.5 Meeting with Suspected OA member

Staff members under such suspicion will be invited to take part in a meeting with the Safeguarding Team where the allegations against them will be outlined and they will have a right to defend their case. They may bring a third party for support. The Safeguarding Team will meet again in private to discuss how to proceed.

7.2.6 Welfare Home involvement

Where it is found that a child has been materially harmed by an OA staff member, the Welfare Home, as the primary guardian of the child, must be involved as soon as the evidence is clear, or sooner, at the discretion of the Safeguarding Team. This may be done through the OA Welfare Home Liaison, through the Safeguarding Team Korean speaking member, or through an external organization, as appropriate. OA will cooperate with any subsequent legal process initiated by the welfare home.

7.2.7 Internal Disciplinary Action

Where allegations against OA staff/representatives are found to be true on the balance of evidence available, disciplinary action will be taken, independently of any external processes. If an accusation of sexual abuse at any level is found to be true, his/her contract or membership of OA will be terminated. If there is evidence of physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect, depending on the severity, a written warning will be filed against the staff member and retraining given or the contract will be immediately terminated.

7.2.8 Results and Follow-Up

All witnesses who have submitted a report and any OA staff member under suspicion must be informed of the completion and, if possible, the results of the investigation within 7 days of completion (unless legal restrictions prevent it). Support may be offered to OA staff and representatives affected who continue to work with the child. If the allegation proves to be unsubstantiated then a written report stating the facts will be tabled and explained to all involved.

7.3 Dealing with reports concerning Incidents in Emergencies

Any reports concerning Incidents in Emergencies, where a member of staff has used force which might be interpreted as abuse (eg. restraining a child for their own safety or that of others in circumstances described in 6.1.4 above), should

be considered on the assumption that the OA staff member or representative has tried to act in the best interests of the child, unless evidence arises to the contrary.

The Safeguarding Team will contact the welfare home via the Welfare Home Liaison to discuss and seek advice. If necessary, training will be given to the individual and/or the whole team on how to deal with such incidents in the future. OA will work with the welfare home to ensure better support for the program and OA staff.

7.4 Dealing with reports regarding individuals outside of OA

Where the suspected perpetrator of the child abuse is not an OA staff member, volunteer or representative, or anyone else acting on OA's behalf, the Safeguarding Team should be guided in its reporting by the Partnership Agreement or other agreement in place with the welfare home affected. The relevant Welfare Home Liaison should be involved, even if they will not be the person communicating the matter to the welfare home. They know the welfare home staff and culture best. The matter should be appropriately and sensitively reported, bearing in mind the best interests of the child, the severity of the alleged abuse, and the relationship with the welfare home. OA shall not regard itself as an investigator of such allegations, but will cooperate with any investigations instigated by other parties.

7.5 Whistleblower's Form

From time to time, a report may be made using the Whistleblower's Form. This form is monitored by the CPO and can be submitted anonymously. It may therefore be difficult to action the information, depending on the amount of detail given, and discretion should be exercised if direct accusations are made using this form. Matters raised concerning child protection should be investigated as thoroughly as possible, but if necessary, a "watch and see" approach should be taken.

7.6 Review of Child Protection Policy and Documents

At the completion of any investigation, the Child Protection Policy and any relevant policy documents will be reviewed.

8. Ensuring Child Protection safeguards in partnerships that provide volunteers/other staff

Where OA grants access to its programs with children, or introduces welfare homes to parties external to its own organization, it must make sure that the individuals and organizations concerned are fully aware of child protection policy and procedures, and committed to following them.

8.1 Partnerships with a Partnership Agreement

Where a partnership is formalized with a Partnership Agreement, OA must make sure that the Agreement covers Child Protection and that members of the organization understand the implications for the relationship with OA. In particular, for partnership programs that involve volunteering with the children, the following information should be sought prior to forming the Agreement and during each subsequent review:

- How the potential partner organization recruits members to its organization, who may be granted access to OA's programs.
- How the organization checks the identity of its members.
- Whether the organization has its own Child Protection Policy, what its terms are, and when it was last reviewed.

The Agreement should state clearly whether the partnership comes under OA's Child Protection Policy or if the partner organization is using its own policy.

The Agreement should establish how partnership members who attend programs as part of the partnership are to be identified by OA. Volunteering by members of the partnership organization will be by invitation as part of the partnership program. Volunteers who wish to volunteer in OA's regular programs must become members of OA.

Partner organization Agreements should be time-limited and require renewal of the child protection provisions on an annual basis. If the relationship lapses, any partnership program volunteers must either cease volunteering or register as a Member of OA in order to continue to volunteer.

8.2 Partnerships without an Agreement

Where an Agreement does not exist, volunteering opportunities should not be provided except under the same terms as external visitors (see below). Any member of the partner organization wishing to volunteer regularly must register as a Member of OA.

9. External Visitors (Donors, Media, Other NGOs)

OA prevents unannounced visits. However, we accept that at times, prospective volunteers, donors, media and partners with whom we work, or wish to work, will want to visit our programs. These visits must be agreed in advance with the Program Manager or Education Director, who will also arrange permissions with the welfare home for all external visitors except for prospective volunteers.

All visitors must be provided with the OA Child Protection Policy Briefing Note and are required to sign the Declaration for Visitors that they have received and agree to our policies.

CP Tool 10: [Child Protection Declaration for Visitors and Briefing Note](#)

- An OA staff member must be designated to accompany visitors to programs and remain with the visitor at all times.
- OA Staff must not disclose information that identifies families or children to unauthorized persons or make such information available to the general public without informed consent of the families or children.
- For interviews with children, photography and film-making, visitors are required to gain written consent from the welfare home director or manager. This must only be done with the full knowledge and co-operation of the Team Leader and the Welfare Home Liaison.

10. Photography Guidelines

Photographs are a powerful means of imagery. OA uses text and imagery from its projects. We recognise a child's right to be accurately represented and accept our responsibility not to portray a manipulated or sensationalized image of the child's well-being and circumstances. Children must be presented as human beings with their own identity and dignity preserved. There is an imbalance of power between the photographer and the child and a potential for exploitation. It is the responsibility of the photographer not to misuse this imbalance. We will:

- Make sure that OA staff members understand the photography guidelines and are sensitive to the wishes of children and other staff not to be photographed.
- Ensure that only designated program staff take photos, that they upload these to a secure shared space for OA use only and that they then delete the photos from their phones.
- Ensure that all staff who have access to these photos understand they are confidential.
- Ensure that social media managers understand how to anonymise photos so as to respect the privacy of the children portrayed before posting photos in OA's social media, website and other publications.
- Where pictures showing individual children's faces are to be published, we will also get the prior written consent of the legal guardian and inform everyone how the images will be used before access to photography is granted.

CP Tool 11: [Informed Consent Form for Legal Guardians of Children aged under 18 years being interviewed and/or photographed](#)).

- Ensure all children are appropriately dressed according to their culture of origin. Recording images of naked children is prohibited.
- Focus on activities and feature groups of children rather than individuals.
- Ensure recorded images are decent and respectful to children, not presenting them as victims.
- Ensure that a child's history, picture folders and photographs are stored in a secure area to which a limited number of people have access. Disclosure of these photographs can be made only with relevant parties' permission.

- Ensure that in publications, details which can identify children are not revealed. First name, age, gender and general location are allowed but should also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any concerns or complaints about inappropriate or intrusive images can be discussed via the team leader or, if appropriate, reported and recorded like any other Child Protection matter via the Child Protection Incident Form or the Whistleblower's Form.

11. Partnerships with Welfare Homes

OA values its partnerships with welfare homes. It acknowledges that it operates at the invitation of the welfare home Director. In order to work together better, OA will provide welfare homes with which it is starting a relationship, an initial Information Pack detailing how it works, lines of communication, and the steps that it will take together with the Welfare Home to prevent the possibility of abuse from OA staff, or unwarranted accusations of abuse.

11.1 Welfare Homes and child protection

The Welfare Home Liaison should make sure that the following points are discussed with and clearly understood by the welfare homes.

11.1.1 Lines of communication

- Lines and methods of communication will be clearly set out so that the Welfare Home and OA know who their points of contact are and how to get in touch with them.
- OA will provide the Welfare Homes with a named Korean speaking contact - the Welfare Home Liaison. In addition, the Education Director and relevant Program Leaders will be introduced.
- The Pack will explain how the Welfare Home can identify OA staff members on programs.

11.1.2 OA staff member contact outside programs

- Any OA staff member who needs to have contact with the home or children outside of the program hours will be officially introduced through the proper lines of communication.
- If the Welfare Home becomes aware of an OA staff member who is contacting it or visiting without official notice, they should contact OA through their official channels without delay to check the status of the OA staff member.
- Any person visiting a welfare home outside of programs and claiming to be from OA without prior notification should be challenged for their ID and the name checked through the official OA communication channel.
- Welfare homes are responsible for the vetting of any OA staff member who may from time to time wish to sponsor, mentor or tutor a welfare home child or children, as this would be considered to be

independent of their OA role. Welfare homes are asked to let their Welfare Home Liaison know through the OA communication channel should they become aware of any OA staff member who has done so. OA staff members are also required to inform OA via the Declaration of Association form.

11.1.3 Welfare Home Staffing provision

- Welfare Homes will make sure that OA staff members involved in programs can easily identify their staff.
- Welfare Home staff are welcome to visit, watch and participate in OA programs.
- Where no Welfare Home staff are present in the room, the Welfare Home will make sure they can be contacted quickly in case of an emergency.
- Whilst OA programs are group based, in case a 1:1 mentoring program is agreed, Welfare Homes will ensure they provide a suitable room where the session can easily be overlooked, eg. from an open door or internal window in a well frequented area.

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Adopted on 2024-03-18 by Open Arms Executive Committee

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee:

Acting Executive Director

Inger Winther Johannsen

Date:

Next Review: January 2025

Child Protection Tool Annex

CP Tool 1: Role Description of Child Protection Officer

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) is responsible for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy. The CPO will be part of the Safeguarding Team who will help to manage and investigate cases of suspected child abuse within OA, liaise with welfare homes and consult where necessary with outside agencies.

The CPO will chair annual reviews of the Child Protection Policy with the assistance of the Safeguarding Team and submit the review to the OA Executive Committee for approval.

The CPO is directly answerable to the Executive Director of OA, will be supported by the Finance and Administrative Director, and work closely with the Education and Volunteer Directors.

The following specific duties apply to the role of CPO:

- Chair the meetings of the Safeguarding Team and ensure that all the provisions of the policy are being managed.
- Advise other members of OA on implementation of the provisions of the policy in all relevant areas of OA's work, including but not limited to: applications and registrations of new members; job applications; interviews; staff and volunteer training; Partnership Agreements; other partnerships and all associated paperwork.
- Ensure members of the Safeguarding Team are able to keep up to date with developments in Korean law and international best practice regarding Child Protection and can receive training.
- With the Safeguarding Team, act as a focal point to receive information on Child Protection concerns or allegations of child abuse from OA staff members, volunteers, children and community members that OA comes into contact with.
- Chair the Safeguarding Team when responding to any allegation that is being raised, following the response procedures as outlined in the Child Protection Policy and taking into account any Partnership Agreement in place.
- With the Safeguarding Team, decide the appropriate reporting of allegations on a need-to-know basis, both within OA and to external organizations.
- Be particularly mindful of culture when reporting to welfare homes, using a trusted interlocutor to liaise on sensitive issues.
- Build relationships with local agencies/institutions where relevant.

- Receive and check references and oversee recruitment from the safeguarding perspective.
- Securely file away all documentation relating to Child Protection incidents and maintain confidentiality.
- Prepare a review of Child Protection Policy and procedures for the Executive Director and OA Executive Committee at the close of any investigation

CP Tool 2: [Application Form](#)

CP Tool 3: Staff Recruitment

The following points specific to child safeguarding should be included in any staff recruitment procedures as may from time to time be formulated.

It is important to include these in the recruitment of all candidates, regardless of their gender, how you feel about them or how well you know them, the role they will have in the organization or the duration of their contract. When recruiting consultants, interns and volunteers it is still advisable to carry out these steps.

PRIOR TO APPLICATION: Advertisement and Job Description

- Include a Child Protection statement in the advertisement for the post. E.g., “Recruitment and selection procedures reflect our commitment to protect children from abuse.”
- Include a Child Protection statement in the job description. E.g., “Commitment to the vision and goals of Open Arms, including adherence to the Child Protection Policy, is essential.”
- Make the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Association summaries available to interested candidates.

INFORMATION CHECKED BY ONBOARDING TEAM

Ensure the following items are received and correctly filled:

- Application Form
- Agreement to Code of Conduct
- Completed Declaration of Association or Nil Return
- National or Alien Identity Card or Passport
- Check the details on the application form against the details on the identity card.
- Check the candidate is over the age of 18.

- Check the candidate’s answer to the question on accusations or convictions concerning crimes against children.
- Send Character Reference Form to referees given by candidate.

INFORMATION CHECKED BY SAFEGUARDING TEAM

- Make sure the Character Reference Form enquires about the suitability of the candidate to have direct contact with children. E.g. “Does the referee know of any issues or incidents involving the candidate and his/her contact with children?”
- As references are received, check them and let the Onboarding Team know if they are satisfactory or not.
- Liaise with the Onboarding Team if the referees given are not suitable (eg, related to the candidate), to ask the candidate to give more suitable referees. Often the candidate’s work or educational history will help to identify a better referee.
- If possible, phone referees given on the Character Reference Form to cross check: referees are often more revealing and give more critical and/or honest feedback on the candidate when they discuss the candidate verbally rather than in a written reference.
- Record any referee’s verbal comments and keep them with the relevant character reference of the candidate in the safeguarding workspace.
- Liaise with the Onboarding Team to receive a copy of the Police Check Record if the candidate has indicated they have one.
- Keep copies of any Police Record Checks received in the safeguarding workspace.

INTERVIEW:

The interview is an opportunity to assess the suitability of OA’s potential staff and representatives in relation to Child Protection. Interviewers should remember that child abusers appear ‘normal’ and are skilled in deception. Therefore, everyone should be asked the same questions without discrimination. The issue of child abuse should be openly discussed in the interview.

- Where possible, have at least 2 people on each interview panel and allow each person to contribute their feelings about the candidate’s suitability (especially if they will have access to children).
- Whilst one person is asking a question, the other should observe the reaction of the candidate

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job history checked (if applicable). Query any gaps, especially for extended periods. For Membership applications, check travel and volunteer history.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions on convictions/disciplinary record.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions on Child Protection issues relevant to the role.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate that OA has a comprehensive Child Protection Policy and procedure.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the candidate is familiar with the Code of Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions about candidate’s relationships with the referees – this can reveal any bias or the duration of time and the depth to which the referee knows the candidate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check on qualifications claimed on application form

<p>ASKING CHILD PROTECTION QUESTIONS IN THE INTERVIEW</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the candidate is at ease during the interview, ask at least 2 questions related to child protection, e.g., one of the “Experience with children” questions and one of the “Hypothetical questions” given below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should check what the candidate says in answer to the question and the way the candidate reacts to the questions. Take note of any non-verbal responses. For example, do they look uncomfortable, does their body language change?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust your instincts about how a person makes you feel and their responses to the questions asked.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not forget that child abuse is not only about sexual abuse and not all child abusers are male, for example, it could be that some female candidates are overly harsh in their disciplining of children.
<p>EXAMPLES OF CHILD PROTECTION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:</p>
<p>Experience with children:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a candidate why they want to work in a child-focussed organization. • Are you aware of the Child Protection Policy, what do you think of it? • Do you like working with children? Do you feel comfortable working directly with children? Listen carefully to the candidate’s response to this

question – avoid a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response and encourage candidates to explain why they like being with children.

- Can you give an example of your work with children, either as a volunteer or in paid employment? Please describe your role and how you worked with children.
- Have you ever been in trouble with the police? If yes, please explain. Again, look for non-verbal indicators.
- Have you worked/volunteered in an organization with children before? If yes, can you describe your role? Why did you leave? Who from the organization can act as a referee for you?

Hypothetical questions:

- If a child is misbehaving in a classroom what is the best way a volunteer can get the child to behave and pay attention to what is being discussed in the classroom?
- You witness one of your friends hitting their child; how do you feel about this and what do you do?
- If you heard a rumor that an OA staff member had sexually abused a child, what action would you take?

ONCE A CANDIDATE IS APPOINTED:

- Keep the resumé of the person in their personal file, along with any notes made during the interview and references.
- Ensure the new staff member/representative has a verbal briefing on the Child Protection policy.
- Ensure the new staff member participates in an induction, based on the job description for the post they are filling.

CP Tool 4: [Character References](#)

CP Tool 5: [Code of Conduct Form](#), [Code of Conduct Summary](#)

CP Tool 6: [Declaration of Association Form](#), [Declaration Summary](#)

CP Tool 7: [Whistleblower’s Form](#)

CP Tool 8: [Child Protection Incident Reporting Form](#)

CP Tool 9: Child Protection: Members of the Safeguarding Team

The acting CPO is: Inger Johannsen

The Korean speaking Safeguarding Team member is:

The Independent Safeguarding Team member is:

The OA Executive Director is: Inger Johannsen

Name	Phone Number	Email
Inger Johannsen	010-4361-6738	safeguarding@theopenarms.org

CP Tool 10: Child Protection Policy Declaration for Visitors and Briefing Note

CP Tool 11: Informed Consent for Legal Guardians of Children aged under 18 years being interviewed and/or photographed

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Resources Used

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UNICEF. 2001. Profiting from Abuse. Geneva: UNICEF.

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<http://www.korea1391.go.kr/new/page/eng/resource.php> English page of Korean National Center for the Rights of the Child with national and local Child Protection Agency offices in Korea

[Save the Children External Facing Child Safeguarding Policy 2019](#)

[International Classification of Violence against Children](#) Figure 1

Figure 1: Determining whether an act constitutes violence against children

